

centres of feathers more or less dark but not black; *S. frontalis* has the sub-terminal tail-band very obscure and only on the inner webs, whereas the sub-terminal band in the tail feathers of *S. osculans* is black and very marked and extends to the outer webs.

As before stated, the examples from the Grampian Range correspond with specimens from Mt. Lofty Range, in South Australia, in all but the sub-terminal band in the tail feathers, which does not in these extend to the outer webs. In the event of the ultimate acceptance of *S. osculans* as a full species, I would suggest the adoption of *grampianensis* as a sub-specific name of the form of *S. osculans* occurring in the Grampians, the distinguishing character being the non-extension of the sub-terminal band to the outer webbing of the tail feathers. But for the present, in conformity with the R.A.O.U. Checklist, the birds from the Grampians must be known as *Sericornis frontalis osculans* Gould.—EDWIN ASHBY, Blackwood, South Australia (5/1/27).

From Magazines.

Egg-collecting.—According to the *Ibis* for January, the result of the special meeting of the B.O.U. called for 8th December last to deal with the case of Mr. Edgar Chance and the Crossbill matter (mentioned in the January *Emu*) was that a motion was proposed condemning the action of the Committee in requesting Mr. Chance to resign his membership; this motion, after some discussion, was rejected by a large majority, only 12 members out of 103 present voting for the motion.

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White Birds.—In a recent article entitled "Snowbirds" in the *Illustrated London News*, Mr. W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., refers to the change of plumage of the Ptarmigan of the highlands of Scotland from the brown in summer to snow-white in winter, and of the Willow-Grouse of northern Europe, which becomes pure white in winter. These changes, he says, we are justified in assuming are "in direct response to the need of a protectively-coloured dress, a mantle of invisibility to enable the wearer to escape its enemies." In support of this Mr. Pycraft points out that most northern animals turn white in winter, and some, like the Polar Bear and the Snowy Owl, are white all the year round, though the Owl has inappreciable dark markings. He goes on to say that there are cases of white liveries that cannot be "attributed to the need of harmonization with a snow-covered landscape," and instances the White Goshawk, of Australia, a White Mexican Hawk and an Egyptian Vulture. He also points out that all the Swans of the world, even the strange, goose-like Coscoroba Swan of South America, are white, except the Australian Swan and the Black-necked Swan of southern South America. He concludes: "So, then, while we can be quite justified in regarding a white dress as a specially developed and protective dress in all cases where it is associated with a long winter season with an unvarying mantle of

snow, there are other factors inducing whiteness which have clearly nothing to do with snow, and are still to be sought for."

This is, no doubt, a most interesting question. As to the White Goshawk of Australia, Cuvier long ago suggested that it was an albino variety that had become permanent. There is a record by Mr. H. G. Barnard from north Queensland of a pure white male bird mating with a grey female bird. The new Australian Checklist does not list a separate white species; it gives *Astur (Leucospiza) novae-hollandiae*, Grey (White) Goshawk. Then there is the White Cockatoo of Australia (*Kakatoe galerita*), a unique species. How is its whiteness to be accounted for?

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Birds Crossing the Atlantic.—In drawing attention to cases of Kittiwake Gulls crossing the Atlantic from England to Canada, the Editor of *British Birds* desires to make it known that his readers have placed rings on the legs of over 170,000 wild birds during the last seventeen years. Each ring is stamped "Witherby, High Holborn, London," and bears a distinctive number. Any person finding a bird bearing such a ring is asked to communicate at once details of the number and the date and place of the finding or capture of the bird to the address named, in order that its migration and other history may be recorded.

Correspondence.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RECORDS.

(To the Editor.)

Sir,—In *The Emu*, Vol. XXVI., pp. 207-211, an article appears on a "Trip to the Coorong," by Mr. M. A. R. Arnold, R.A.O.U., in which there are several matters that call for comment. One new record is made for South Australia and four new records for the Coorong.

The White-fronted Tern (*Sterna striata*) has not previously been seen in South Australia. Its habitat is given in the Checklist as "E.A., T., N.Z. coasts." As no specimen was secured and the bird is not readily recognised on the wing, our Association is not prepared to accept this record.

The four records for the Coorong are—

1. Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*).—"Seen once on samphire flat." As the migratory waders are, almost without exception, in the non-breeding plumage it is well-nigh impossible to identify a bird such as this. The three specimens already recorded for South Australia are: one from Kangaroo Island, and two from Stansbury, Yorke Peninsula, all taken on the seashore.

2. Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*).—"Small parties seen occasionally on beaches." How is it possible to distinguish this